DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 207 196 EA 013 981

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TITLE Student Discipline and Other Related Concerns of the Public Schools of New Mexico.
INSTITUTION New Mexico State Legislature, Santa Fe. Legislative Education Study Committee.
PUB DATE 20 Jan 80
NOTE 45p.; Report of the Legislative Education Study Committee to the Thirty-Fifth Legislature, First Session, in response to Senate Finance Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 11 of the Thirty-Fourth Legislature, Second Session.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Attendance; Corporal Punishment; *Discipline Policy; *Discipline Problems; Elementary Secondary Education; Hearings; Parent Participation; Student Promotion; Suspension; Truancy
IDENTIFIERS Disruption; New Mexico

ABSTRACT

In an investigation authorized by a 1980 state law, the Legislative Education Study Committee of New Mexico, gathered testimony on student conduct and discipline issues in the local public schools. This report presents a summary of the committee's public hearings, in which parents, teachers, administrators, and community members testified. Contrary to expectations, little testimony dealt with the actual status of discipline in the public schools; considerably more testimony consisted of suggestions and recommendations about how to improve discipline. Major issues included disruption of schools by non-students, attendance problems, social promotion (where students are promoted without having mastered academic skills), corporal punishment, in-school suspension procedures, parental involvement, school academic standards, and vocational education. The report concludes with specific recommendations for legislative and school district actions. Attached to the report are a list of the suggestions received in testimony, data on hearings attendance, and a copy of the bill authorizing the investigation. (JEH)

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# STUDENT DISCIPLINE AND OTHER RELATED CONCERNS OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NEW MEXICO

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Report of the Legislative Education Study Committee to the Thirty-Fifth Legislature, First Session, in response to Senate Finance Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 11 of the Thirty-Fourth Legislature, Second Session

EA 013 991

Jan. 20, 1980

STATE OF NEW MEXICO
LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
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INTRODUCTION

This report is the result of an investigation of the public schools of New Mexico undertaken by the Legislative Education Study Committee which consisted of a series of public hearings held during the past year, as authorized by SFCS/Senate Bill 11 which was passed by the 1980 Legislature, to receive testimony relative to student discipline, in-school suspension, social promotion, non-student loitering, parking lot privileges, student rights and responsibilities, and student academic achievement. A total of six hearings were held in communities chosen to provide an opportunity for individuals in all parts of the state to conveniently attend and present testimony.

That interest and concern about student discipline in the public schools of New Mexico is high is evidenced by the fact that attendance at the hearings totaled 1,259 with testimony received from 286 individuals.

This report presents the findings of the L.E.S.C. as to the types of student discipline problems in the schools of New Mexico and presents some possible solutions to these problems. This report is by no means an exhaustive review of the extent of various discipline problems in the schools, nor does it propose simple or final solutions to the problems discussed. The report does, however, present a broad overview of conditions in the schools, and represents the concerns and suggestions of the hundreds of people who testified.

It is hoped that this report will contribute to an awareness of the problems facing the schools and provide constructive ideas to the legislature, school authorities, parents, students, and community members about how the solutions to these problems can be found.

The first part of the report contains an overview of each of the six hearings, including a review of the specific issues discussed at each hearing. The second part reports on the types of discipline problems present in the schools and discusses the seriousness of each problem.

Included in this section are suggestions presented at the hearings as to how these problems can be addressed and descriptions of programs in use in various parts of the state to help solve each of the problems. The third section contains the recommendations for action by the legislature and the schools which could help in the reduction of student discipline problems in schools in New Mexico. The last section of the report lists the various suggestions presented in the hearings according to the frequency with which they were mentioned.

OVERVIEW OF THE HEARINGS

The series of public hearings began on April 9, 1980 in Las Vegas, and concluded on October 8, 1980 in Farmington. Each hearing consisted of two sessions; the first held in the evening and the second held the following day. In this way, the hearings were made as convenient as possible so that all who were interested could attend. Each hearing was well publicized with newspaper, television, and radio announcements. Most schools announced the hearings to their student bodies and parents. Members of the Committee appeared on radio programs to discuss the hearings. Several newspapers ran series of articles on discipline in the public schools of their areas. In several communities the hearings fostered increased interest in discipline in the schools even before the actual hearing was held. In order to insure that viewpoints of all groups concerned about the school were heard, the New Mexico Congress of Parents and Teachers (specifically named in SFCS/SB 11), the New Mexico School Boards Association, the New Mexico School Administrators, the National Education Association - New Mexico, and the New Mexico Federation of Teachers all named representatives to appear at the hearings and present testimony. Also, the State Department of Education aided in securing school bus drivers and contractors and the Administrative Office of the Courts named Juvenile Probation Officers to testify at each hearing. Representatives of the State Department of Education attended each of the hearings and answered or clarified many questions. Several groups named representatives to present testimony at the hearings, including the New Mexico Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and the Roswell Coalition of Minority Organizations.

Each hearing followed a similar format, beginning with an explanation of the legislation calling for the hearings and an introduction of the members of the Committee and other legislators present. Then, testimony was received from those who had been requested to testify along with any others who wished to speak. The only restriction placed on testimony was that it be limited to five minutes in length. Each hearing continued until everyone present who wished to testify had been given an opportunity to do so, which in one case meant that the hearing did not adjourn until

after 11:00 p.m. A review of the testimony shows that virtually all groups involved with the schools testified at the hearings as to their feelings about discipline and other concerns. These groups included parents, teachers, administrators, school board members, State Department of Education officials, juvenile probation officers, social workers, community members, college students, community organizers, school bus drivers, school bus contrators, judges, police chiefs, school security personnel, foster parents, college professors, and most importantly of all perhaps, students. In all, testimony was received from a total of 286 different individuals.

To say that the many individuals who testified represented a wide variety of viewpoints would be a considerable understatement. Many of the issues discussed were controversial, and the testimony reveals considerable disagreement on certain issues. However, the record also reveals a pattern of agreement among all groups on a variety of issues. Relatively few people testified as to complaints or specific problems with their schools. Instead, most of the testimony presented suggestions or recommendations as to how the schools could be improved. Also, many individuals testified as to the successes of their local schools, including successful programs designed to prevent or treat disciplinary problems, with much of this testimony received from students and parents who had been involved with the programs in some way. Apparently, much is being done in schools around New Mexico at the present time to combat problems, and much of the testimony was, in fact, a report on these activities.

One other characteristic of the hearings was that each was very different from the others. Although many attitudes and concerns about the schools were consistent statewide, other concerns varied from place to place. Apparently the problems faced by the schools differ depending upon the community, as do the solutions for these problems. These differences can best be seen by reviewing the testimony heard at each hearing.

Las Vegas

The first public hearing was held in Las Vegas on the evening of April 9, 1980 followed by a morning session on April 10. Both sessions were well attended, especially considering the small size of the community. A small number of parents attended, which could reflect a possible lack of adequate publicity, apathy, or satisfaction with the public schools. School personnel were especially well represented at this hearing, with at least ten school districts from as far away as Espanola and Raton represented. Teachers were also well represented, including several from around the state enrolled in graduate study at New Mexico Highlands University. The university was represented by several faculty members and deans. In response to a request from members of the Committee, several area public school students were also present at the morning session.

The parents who testified to the Committee reported a variety of viewpoints concerning the schools. The need for strong enforcement of discipline by the schools and parents was mentioned, as was the need for parent involvement and cooperation. One parent spoke against the practice of social promotion, believing instead that the basic skills of each grade level should be mastered before a student is allowed to advance. Satisfaction with the discipline in the local schools was expressed by one parent.

Teachers in attendance expressed a number of concerns and opinions. Several teachers felt that they did not experience discipline problems in their classes, but that problems did occur outside of classrooms and on school grounds. These problems are often caused by non-students according to one teacher. Also mentioned was the need to provide a pleasant, well-maintained school in which students can take pride, and the need to provide students with options such as vocational education.

A number of school administrators spoke at this hearing, and made suggestions for reducing school discipline problems. Several administrators mentioned the Compulsory School Attendance Law as being one possible area of change, although no specific recommendations for changes were made.

Of particular interest at this hearing was a question and answer period between members of the Committee and a group of area students. After a period of initial hesitancy, the students expressed themselves openly and candidly about their opinions concerning the problems of the schools. The students all felt that discipline should be more strict and that students should be held accountable for their actions. The students also agreed that the best teachers are those who genuinely care for their students, and that such teachers seldom experience discipline problems in their classes.

The Student Rights and Responsibilities Regulation of the State Board of Education was also reviewed at this hearing. The regulation establishes guidelines and procedures to be followed by schools in disciplinary actions in order to safeguard against violation of protected individual rights.

Albuquerque

The second public hearing under SFCS/SB 11 was held in Albuquerque on April 30 and May 1, 1980. This hearing differed greatly from the one held in Las Vegas in that a variety of differing viewpoints was heard. Despite wide publicity given the hearings by Albuquerque television and radio stations attendance was low, particularly considering the size of the community. Several individuals testified that the lack of attendance could have been due to such factors as competition from a sports event on television (an NBA play-off game) or a feeling of frustration in dealing with the schools.

The parents who testified at this hearing expressed general concern over the conditions in the public schools. Some parents demanded stricter enforcement of discipline, and expressed anger over the school's approach to problems. Other parents expressed concern over the large size of Albuquerque high schools, and felt that this size contributed greatly to the problems. Also expressed was the opinion that large school districts were not able to adequately respond to problems as they occur.

A large number of teachers testified at this hearing about the problems

they face in their classrooms. The teachers also mentioned the problems associated with large schools and expressed a desire that more alternative educational programs be provided. According to several teachers, such alternative programs can be very successful with many problem students, and could help all students by reducing disruptions in the school.

Although teachers were in general agreement on most issues, they were not in agreement on the issue of corporal punishment. Some saw corporal punishment as a valuable tool with some students, which should be allowed. Others felt that corporal punishment was not effective, and could, in fact, be harmful to some students. This issue has apparently been discussed at length within the Albuquerque district, and will probably remain an issue in the future.

Testimony was also received at the Albuquerque hearing from a large number of students, including both student leaders and students with histories of discipline problems. All agreed on the need for strict enforcement of discipline and stated that effective, caring teachers established good discipline in their classes. The students in general agreed that in-school suspensions are preferable to conventional out-of-school suspensions and that social promotion should not be allowed. Several students also described an alternative education program called Los Amigos in which they were enrolled, and stated that the program had prevented them from being truant, disobedient, or from dropping out of school entirely. A highlight of this hearing was a visit to Rio Grande High School to visit this program first hand.

One presentation at this hearing detailed an apparent correlation between juvenile delinquency and visual perception problems. This relationship has been found at the New Mexico Youth Diagnostic Center, where over 70% of the young people admitted are found to have some type of vision problem, usually undiagnosed. It was recommended that the schools should screen all children for vision problems as a means to prevent poor academic achievement and possible discipline problems.

Las Cruces

The third public hearing was held on May 19 and 20, 1980 in Las Cruces. The meeting room was set-up to hold approximately the same number of people that had attended the hearings in Las Vegas and Albuquerque, however all seats were quickly taken leaving only standing room for those who wished to attend. This large turn-out for the hearing was apparently due to the advance publicity given the hearing in the local press, including a series of feature articles on student discipline. In contrast to the previous hearings, parents were especially well represented at the hearing.

The hearing began with a report by staff of the Las Cruces schools on the discipline policy of the district. One feature of this overall policy is a strict attendance policy, which was credited with being of considerable help in reducing truancy. Also described were the standards for student behavior which have been established by the district.

Teachers and parents testified in large numbers as to the problems faced by the schools. Generally these concerns echoed those expressed at the previous hearings, including social promotion, drug and alcohol use, and the need for strict discipline. Alternative education programs and in-school suspension were also generally supported by those who testified.

Several of those testifying at the Las Cruces hearing discussed loitering around or on school campuses by non-students. This problem was addressed specifically by the Las Cruces police chief and a high school principal. According to these individuals, non-students often loiter around the high school campuses in Las Cruces, with some of these persons suspected of distributing drugs to students. Apparently, non-students occasionally will enter the school grounds which causes a further disruption of the educational process in the school. The members of the Committee visited one of the Las Cruces high schools and saw several non-students in and around parked cars just off the school property. According to teachers at the school, the non-students were among those suspected of distributing

drugs to students. School officials felt they were powerless to remove the individuals due to a lack of appropriate laws.

Also discussed at length in this hearing were various alternative educational programs in the Las Cruces Public Schools. One program in particular, EXCEL, was praised by parents, students, and school staff as being a valuable educational tool in the community. In this program, students work for periods of time in various community jobs, such as the New Mexico State University police department, the university television station, or local businesses. The testimony stressed that EXCEL was not considered a vocational education program per se, but was intended to expose students to a wide variety of "real world" experiences in order to provide an incentive to learn.

Although the testimony at the Las Cruces hearing covered many concerns and problems of the schools in the community, the overall impression of the hearing was that the citizens of Las Cruces are proud of their community and school system, and wish to make both even better.

Clovis

After a recess during the summer months, the series of hearings began again on September 15 and 16, 1980 in Clovis. Testimony in Clovis included several concerns that had not been extensively discussed at the previous hearings, along with further comment on some of the previously identified areas.

Several individuals testified as to the need for open lines of communication between parents and school officials, an area which testimony indicated had improved recently in the Clovis schools. The in-school suspension programs of the Clovis schools were discussed, with a consensus that the programs are effective but that they need much better facilities than are presently provided. Apparently, one school has been forced to house its program in an unused closet since other facilities are not available.

A school bus contractor testified that the policies of the Clovis schools

and of his company that any disruptive student be removed from school buses until such time as the student will no longer misbehave has been responsible for the virtual absence of discipline problems on his school buses.

Several juvenile probation officers testified as to their problems in adequately dealing with juvenile offenders. According to the JPO's, the Children's Code restricts the number of alternatives available to them, but the schools do offer excellent cooperation in matters which concern them. The Clovis high school principal reported on measures taken to combat loitering on school grounds by non-students, but stated that the applicable statutes needed strengthening.

The Clovis hearing was well attended and the testimony reflected insight into practical and possible solutions to the problems of the schools.

Roswell

A very different perspective on the problems of the public schools was presented and extensively discussed at the hearing in Roswell on September 16 and 17, 1980. Here much of the testimony focused on an alleged pattern of racial and ethnic discrimination in the Roswell schools which affected both employment and student services in the district. This discrimination was desribed as contributing to disciplinary problems among students since students were seen as feeling that their needs were ignored by the schools. In addition, the alleged under-representation of minority group members in the teaching and administrative staffs of the schools was seen as making it impossible for the schools to provide effective programs for all the students of the district. One more important aspect of this testimony was that disciplinary actions such as suspensions were described not as necessary treatment for a problem on the part of the child but as an instrument of discrimination on the part of the school district.

Another important feature of the Roswell hearing was the testimony of several students from the small school districts of Hagerman and Dexter.

These students reported on the comparative lack of disciplinary problems in their schools, and credited the difference to the smaller school size and stricter enforcement of discipline. It was reported that the strict dress code at Dexter High School, for example, had been overwhelmingly supported in a student referendum on the policy.

The testimony heard at this hearing showed that the public schools cannot be seen in isolation, but must be considered in the context of the community and society in which they function. As long as unresolved problems remain in either society or the community, those problems will be reflected in public schools.

Farmington

The final hearing in Farmington on October 7 and 8, 1980 was the one which focused most heavily on the possible solutions to the problems faced by the public schools in New Mexico. Considerable discussion was given to the specific disciplinary policies and practices of the various school districts in the area, and it was explained how a discipline policy can contribute to the quality of discipline in the district. Representatives of the Gallup and Farmington school districts explained how a disciplinary proceding must be seen as a very important matter in which the rights of the individual accused (in this case a student) must be respected and safeguarded. For this reason, both school systems have established disciplinary hearing procedures and have appointed a specific hearing officer. This procedure was not seen as being restrictive to the school's ability to enforce discipline, but was rather seen as being helpful in that it helped to guarantee consistency. The discipline of the schools is actually enhanced because each student knows that a certain act will result in a certain disciplinary action. The incentive to test the limits of the system is removed.

The Farmington hearing also provided the members of the Committee with an opportunity to examine the specific problems related to the education of Indian children in the schools of New Mexico. The most important aspect of this problem is that Indian children often have poor attendance which

contributes to low academic achievement which in turn contributes to discipline problems in school and other problems throughout the individual's life. Also, Indian children are often in need of development of English language skills, a responsibility which falls squarely on the public schools according to one superintendent. Bilingual education was cited as being very helpful for this type of child because it enables the child to learn the skills required of each grade at the same time the child develops language skills in English. This type of approach helps to prevent children without English language skills from falling behind, something that often happens beginning with the first day a child enrolls in school. Finally, it was pointed out at this hearing that the needs of children and communities can vary dramatically from place to place, which necessitates different approaches in each community. Instances were cited where families on the Navajo reservation must move because of climate conditions or other factors beyond their control. Often these people live in very isolated locations, and occasionally the children of these families are completely unknown to the public schools. The schools must be able to adapt to the needs of these children, and must determine ways to provide alternative forms of education to them.

The Farmington hearing revealed that the problem of student discipline in the schools is not always a simple one to address. For example, the due process rights of students must be respected, and the very different background of Indian children must be considered. Discipline cannot be seen in isolation, but rather must be considered in the light of the community and society in which the schools function.

TESTIMONY: DISCIPLINE IN THE SCHOOLS

Comparatively little of the testimony heard throughout the series of hearings dealt with the actual status of discipline in the public schools. Considerably more of the testimony consisted of suggestions and recommendations about how to improve discipline. However, some discussion was given to the actual nature of the problems in the school, with several different problems described.

Disruption

One characteristic of the hearings was that few individuals mentioned disruption of the school by students as being a serious problem. Testimony was heard in Albuquerque that students were, in some schools, creating an atmosphere that did not permit others to learn, but for the most part the problems identified were different in nature. Disruption of the educational process by non-students was often described. This disruption can take the form of individuals entering school grounds during class hours and distracting students or creating a disturbance. More often, however, this disruption is caused by non-students loitering around the school property, such as across the street from the school or across the rear property line. In some cases, this disruption was described as being the single most important discipline problem faced by the school. The non-student loiterers were often suspected of providing students with drugs and alcohol and encouraging students to miss classes. Some feel that present laws do not provide sufficient means for school districts and local police to combat this problem. Consequently, in some areas school personnel must stand by as non-students who may be selling drugs hang-out around their schools.

Early testimony at the hearings pointed out that student discipline problems do not occur only in the classroom. In fact, discipline problems were described as being much more serious outside the classroom than within it. In particular, disruptive behavior is often reported on school buses. This behavior ranges from loud talking up to severe vandalism. Disruptive behavior on school buses is a particularly serious problem because it can place other students in a very dangerous situation if the school bus driver

is distracted. However, testimony heard at the later hearings showed that school districts are able to combat this very serious problem. Several districts remove disruptive students from school buses and do not allow them to ride until after the parents of the child have conferred with school and bus officials. Others consider reports of disruptive behavior on a school bus in the same way that they would consider any report of a disciplinary problem and handle accordingly. Still other districts feel that the key to the prevention of discipline problems on school buses is the preparation of the driver to be prepared to enforce discipline. In one district, bus drivers are called by their last names by students to symbolize the proper attitude of the student toward the driver. As a result of measures such as these, the bus contractor for one large district reported that discipline problems were nonexistent on his school buses.

Drug and alcohol use was another area in which fewer problems were reported than might have been expected. Curiously, the distribution of drugs and alcohol to students was cited as a problem, but the actual use by students was not. It is possible that parents and school personnel often do not recognize a pattern of drug or alcohol use among students. One student, who admitted to past involvement with drug use, spoke forcefully of the seriousness of the problem among high school age students, saying that drug use changes the personality of the user to the extent that it is difficult or impossible for the student to benefit from school. It is, of course, possible that drug and alcohol use is not a serious problem among students in the public schools of New Mexico. However, it is also possible that the lack of testimony about this problem reflects a lack of awareness on the part of school personnel and community members about the extent of the problem.

Occasionally, problems with disruptive or discipline-problem students require action beyond that available to the school. In these cases, some school personnel reported difficulty with the juvenile justice system. These difficulties were usually related to some provisions of the Children's Code and juvenile probation officers who do not take the problems of the schools seriously. However, other districts reported excellent cooperation with local police and juvenile authorities.

Disruptive behavior is a problem in the public schools of New Mexico, but was seldom reported as being out of control. Apparently, when disruption occurs school personnel, parents, and other students try to handle the situation as best they can. However, it is also apparent that some of the tools that could increase the effectiveness of measures to counteract disruption are missing in some school districts.

Attendance

New Mexico state law requires all school age children to attend school until the age of 18 or until the student has completed the tenth grade and has the permission of his parents to leave school. Aside from this legal consideration, school attendance has been shown to be related to academic achievement in that a student who does not attend school regularly often falls behind other students. As the school work becomes progressively more difficult, such students can become frustrated and lose interest in school. These students can later become disciplinary problems and/or drop-out from school with consequences that reach far beyond the educational system. For this reason, school attendance was extensively discussed at the hearings and was widely seen as one of the most serious problems facing the public schools of New Mexico.

School attendance problems have many different facets involving considerations of the family, the community, the child's culture, and the child himself. Attendance was described at the hearings as being basic to all possible outcomes of the educational experience, both positive and negative. Much of the testimony in this area centered on the policies of the school district in regards to attendance, particularly at the high school level. All such policies are designed to promote the best possible attendance on the part of the student. One feature of many of the policies was statement of the maximum number of days absence that would be permitted by the school before the student would be subject to disciplinary action. Such policies were described as placing the responsibility for attendance on the student since he could choose, in effect, when to use his allotted days. Apparently, these policies are the subject of some local controversy, because some testimony from parents concerned their complaints about the administration

of the policies. However, in most cases students and principals were satisfied with the policies because they shifted the burden for enforcement to the student. One district reported an increase in average attendance from 92% to 96% after the initiation of this type of policy.

Students also described attendance as being a serious problem. Several students described their past patterns of truancy, and then told how important they now considered school attendance to be. These students stated that only the student can decide to value education and attend school. However, students also told how lack of attendance can be caused by boredom in school and the feeling that classes are of little value to the student. Again according to students, the teacher is usually responsible for determining whether a student will feel school to be worth the time and effort. Students often told how certain teachers were able to make every student feel needed and able to make the classwork interesting and challenging. Students also told how other teachers were not able to develop the same desire to be in school on the part of students. Students often ascribed this difference to the level of academic preparation in the subject area by the teacher.

Since state law requires school attendance for most children, school districts have the responsibility to insure attendance by the children enrolled in each district. Testimony revealed that some children do not have a pattern of regular school attendance, missing many days for reasons beyond the control of the school. This problem was usually discussed in relation to the school attendance of young children and was usually blamed on a lack of interest in school on the part of the parents. In such cases, the problem lies with the parent and often cannot be solved by the school working with the child alone. The primary option open to the schools in these cases is to file a petition in Children's Court alleging that the child's educational needs are being neglected by the parents. However, several individuals testified that this problem could be more simply and more effectively addressed if parents were subject to specific penalties when they are responsible for the school absences of their children.

The non-attendance of older children is seen differently that that of young

children. In this case, parents are usually not as directly responsible for the absence from school of the child because the child is choosing to miss school for one of a variety of reasons. Considerable testimony was received on the topic of what to do with this type of student. Many asked that consideration be given to a change in the Compulsory School Attendance Law, such as a reduction in the age at which a student would be allowed to leave school. Under the present law, a student must usually remain in school until he is eighteen years old or has completed the tenth grade and has the permission of his parents to quit school. However, many students lose interest in school well before that time. Often these students are ones who are behind in their studies and may not be anywhere close to completing the tenth grade. When students such as this are required to remain in school against their will they can become more frustrated, more resentful, and can begin to disrupt the education of other students who may wish to remain in school and receive an education.

However, testimony revealed another side of this question which must also be considered. According to several of those testifying, students are usually not able to decide at the age of fifteen, sixteen, or even seventeen whether or not they should remain in school. Children at these ages are very susceptible to peer group pressures and often make decisions on the spur of the moment without consideration of all the possible ramifications of an action. According to this line of thought, students are not able to make an intelligent decision on their own about whether or not they should remain in school and therefore there is need for schools to enforce school attendance as a legal requirement. This point of view was supported by the testimony of several students, one of whom stated that he would have dropped out from school at the age of sixteen had he been allowed to do so. This student was very glad that he had not. Others testified as to their lifelong regret over their decision to leave school.

General agreement was found, however, on one aspect of the problem of school attendance. Most agreed that specific legal penalties for children who do not attend school would not be useful. Apparently the solution to this problem must be found in some other way, such as alternative education programs designed to prevent drop-outs. Such programs will be discussed in

detail later in this report.

Solutions to the problem of school attendance will not be easily found. Only a multi-faceted approach involving the parents, the justice system, the schools, and the student will be successful. Parents must be held accountable if they are responsible for the non-attendance of their children, especially since patterns of school attendance are set at an early age. Schools must seek to address the problems underlying a student's decision to leave school. Finally, the student must also understand that the society has an interest in seeing that each individual receives an education and therefore the compulsion of school attendance by the state is justified.

Social Promotion

One problem of the public schools did receive considerable attention from the individuals who testified at the hearings, even though it is not strictly discipline related. This problem is the social promotion of children.

Social promotion is the passing of students from one grade to the next for reasons other than the satisfactory mastery of the skills taught at each grade level. The reason for the social promotion of a student is usually that the student is felt to need to remain with students closer to his own age. It is apparently felt that the retention of a student who has not mastered the expected skills can be more harmful to the student than the student's promotion.

According to testimony received in the hearings, however, social promotion is widely seen as having a harmful effect on both the school and the individual child. This perception about the practice is shared by teachers, parents, and even students. Social promotion was described as leading to increasing frustration on the part of the student as he struggles to keep up with other students. These frustrated students were seen as being likely to become disruptive of the education of other students or as being possible drop-outs from school. Teachers stated that socially promoted students require more of the teacher's time and attention due to the fact that they

are learning on a different level than other students. Consequently, the teacher has less time to spend with those students who have not been socially promoted. Members of all groups involved with the schools recommended that the practice of social promotion cease.

The testimony also showed, however, that the practice of social promotion cannot be easily stopped. Parents must become more involved with the schools so that decisions regarding retention can be understood and supported. Students with learning disabilities must have those conditions diagnosed at an early age so that the student can receive the specific treatment and learning activities he needs and not be simply punished by retention for a condition over which he has no control. Lastly, the testimony shows that a decision to promote a child for social reasons is an indication that the student's learning needs have not been adequately met by the school. Simply deciding to retain such children will not in itself change this situation. A decision to retain can, however, play a part in seeing that the student receives an education appropriate to his needs.

## Curriculum

Most of the testimony received throughout the hearings dealt with suggestions about how the public schools of New Mexico could be improved to reduce discipline problems and better serve the needs of students. Much of this testimony dealt with the curriculum of the schools, or what and how the schools teach. Although not all testimony directly addressed itself to the problems of student discipline, considerable testimony was received about educational programs specifically designed to prevent or to treat discipline problems.

### Corporal Punishment

If a student in the public schools is found to be guilty of misbehavior he is usually made subject to some form of disciplinary action. With young children in the early grades this punishment can be such actions as being kept in from recess, having one's parents called, or being made to do extra work. In some districts in New Mexico corporal punishment is also used as a disciplinary action with small children. Corporal punishment was the

subject of considerable local controversy in several of the communities in which hearings were held. Some parents spoke of their deeply held personal conviction that corporal punishment was morally wrong and had no place in the school system. Others stated that only parents should determine when corporal punishment was to be administered, a position that was strongly disagreed with by school personnel. In some cases, teachers and administrators spoke out strongly against the administration of corporal punishment. One teacher related how she had regretted the one time she had used corporal punishment thoughout her long career as a teacher.

However, corporal punishment is still seen as a valuable and effective tool by many teachers, parents, and even students. Corporal punishment is even used in some cases at the secondary level as an alternative, at the student's option, to short-term suspension. One high school student who had chosen to be spanked rather than receive a suspension remarked that the punishment had been beneficial to her and that her misbehavior (in her case truancy) had ceased. Several districts reported that to be effective corporal punishment must be a part of an overall district plan for discipline and must only be administered in regards to strict guidelines. Such guidelines have been enacted as official school board policy in many districts.

### In-school Suspension

The traditional form of disciplinary action at the secondary level has been suspension from school. When suspended, students are removed from school and not allowed to attend until after a set period of time has passed, and usually not until after the child's parents have met with school authorities. Apparently, suspension can be an effective procedure, especially since it tends to compel the involvement of the parents in the child's problem. However, suspension is also widely seen as being potentially counterproductive with many students. Some misbehavior is done by students who do not particularly want to be in school, and a suspension may not be a punishment at all for these students. It is particularly hard to see how suspension from school is an appropriate punishment for a student whose offense is truancy. To tell students who have been needlessly absent from school (in violation

of the Compulsory School Attendance Law) that their punishment will be a requirement that they not attend school seems to be less than logical. For this reason, several school districts in New Mexico have instituted in-school suspension programs.

In-school suspension differs from conventional suspension in that the student is not allowed to leave school where he will often roam at will. Such students will at times create a disturbance for other students in the school or cause further problems in the community. When a student has been given an in-school suspension he is required to remain in a separate classroom for the duration of the period of the suspension. The in-school suspension isolates the student from other students in the school and does not allow the student to simply roam free in the community or sit at home. In-school suspension provides the additional advantage of giving the school an opportunity to work with the student on a more individual basis to identify and treat the problem that led to the suspension. Many students receiving suspensions have learning disabilities which are best treated on an individual basis. In-school suspension also provides an opportunity for counseling or psychological services to the student. A final advantage is that in-school suspension is simply more of a punishment than conventional suspension in most cases.

In-school suspension is not generally an easy program to establish in the schools. Such programs require a separate room, preferably somewhat removed from the rest of the school so that suspended students can be isolated from the rest of the student body. In-school suspension also requires additional staff, with preparation in remediation or the needs of troubled students desirable. Both of these requirements represent a substantial commitment on the part of the school district, especially when the fact that relatively few students will ever be placed in the program is considered. Smaller school districts in particular find it difficult to commit the resources necessary to operate an in-school suspension program.

The advantages of in-school suspension over traditional suspension appear to be obvious. Such programs can prevent problems in the community from suspended students, can better meet the needs of problem students, and

provide a more effective deterant to misbehavior. It is also clear that these benefits come at a high cost to the school districts.

Alternative Education

Some students seem unable to benefit from the conventional education provided by the public schools. These students may have individual problems or different interests from those reflected in the schools. More commonly, however, such students are simply unable to tolerate the normal structure of the public schools. These students may need a structure more responsive to their individual needs on a day-to-day basis. They may need a tighter structure than the normal school because of a lack of development in self-discipline. Such students may, because of experiences in their lives, find the conventional school trivial and immature. Other students may need more personal contact from an adult than is usually available in a conventional school. The reasons for needing an alternative form of education may be as numerous as the students themselves.

Some school districts in New Mexico have established alternative education programs and others are considering them. The programs in place in New Mexico schools are usually designed for students at the high school level and serve relatively small groups of students. The programs are usually taught by highly motivated teachers who also enjoy the opportunities for individual contact provided by the structure of the programs. Aside from these characteristics, however, alternative education programs vary significantly from district to district.

The Los Amigos program visited by the members of the Committee at Rio Grande High School in Albuquerque is housed in a portable building located behind the main campus. The students receive most of their instruction in the alternative education program and consequently spend far more time with the program's teachers and with the other students than a student normally would spend with one teacher or group of students. This is perhaps the most important feature of alternative education programs. Indeed, this particular program was very similar in organization to self-contained classrooms at the elementary level, where each student is assigned to one

teacher for the entire school day. Students in this and other alternative education programs cited the deeper personal relationships possible as the primary advantage of the programs. Several students ascribed a complete change in attitude toward themselves and toward school to the interaction with a particular teacher in an alternative education program. It is important to note that the program per se was not credited by the students who testified as being responsible for the improvement in their attitude toward school. Rather it was the individual attention and help that they could receive from a teacher that caused the change.

Another program in alternative education that received much praise at the hearings was the EXCEL program of the Las Cruces schools. In this program, as previously described, students are placed in a variety of work experiences in the community. The program also provides a great deal of interaction between the student and the teachers, along with the relationships the students develop with their co-workers and supervisors. This program was lauded by students and parents alike for the positive changes in the attitudes of many students. In testimony received in Farmington, one student attributed his completing high school to participation in an alternative education program in that community.

School personnel were also supportive of alternative education. The primary concern expressed about such programs was their cost. Smaller districts in particular stated that they would like to be able to establish such programs but feel that they cannot due to the necessity to commit scarce resources to them. As in the case of in-school suspension, alternative education programs require additional staff and classroom space. In addition, however, such programs also generally require special curriculum materials and may have other extra costs for factors such as transportation. Larger districts seem better able to meet these costs, partially because of their ability to provide the program to a number of students comparable to a regular classroom, thereby neutralizing the cost of additional staff. One small school district superintendent suggested the possibility that neighboring small districts could cooperate in the establishment and operation of alternative programs.

Alternative education appears, on the basis of the high interest at the hearings, to be an area worthy of continued investigation. Apparently such programs can insure that some students who would be likely to fail in school and drop-out, with potential disastrous results both personally and socially, can remain in school and receive an education which they will find valuable.

Vocational Education

General agreement could be found at the hearings that the basic education provided by the public schools is not the most appropriate one for all students. The public schools are most often providing students with a general education which includes preparation in the so-called basic skills and in traditional academic areas such as history and the sciences. This education is clearly appropriate for many students, especially those who will be attending college and will be receiving further instruction in the academic areas. However, many students in New Mexico schools do not go on to college after high school, choosing instead to enter the work force either immediately of after receiving vocational education. Considerable testimony was received which indicated that the public schools should do more for the large numbers of students who may need some form of vocational education much more than they need a traditional academic preparation.

Vocational education was also seen by many as part of the solution to discipline problems in the schools. Several individuals testified that students who are causing discipline problems may be saying that the traditional education they are receiving is not sufficient for their needs. Vocational education was seen as an alternative for these students. However, others cautioned that vocational education should not be seen as a "dumping ground" for the problem students of the regular school, but should rather be seen as a valuable education in its own right. Vocational students were described in the hearings as being among the most highly motivated students in the public schools and were not seen as being in any way less capable than the student in the traditional program.

Once again, the main stumbling block to the expansion of vocational education

is financial. However, several school districts in New Mexico have expanded their vocational offerings significantly through cooperative arrangements with area vocational schools in their vicinity. Such arrangements are discussed in more detail in the L.E.S.C.'s report on technical education.

Although vocational educators are understandably concerned that their programs not be considered as refuges or treatment centers for problem students, vocational education does have an important role to play in the prevention of student discipline problems. Many student discipline problems such as absenteeism are caused by boredom and disinterest in the traditional academic program. Vocational education is an alternative for some of these students. Also, the hands-on and work-related education received in vocational classes may very well provide an outlet for potentially disruptive students and provide a means for them to develop self discipline through the mastery of a technical skill. Although the purpose of vocational education is clearly not to prevent and treat discipline problems, the role that vocational education can play in the overall improvement of the learning environment of the public schools should not be overlooked.

Parental Involvement

It is perhaps understandable that school personnel would state as frequently as they did in the hearings that the involvement of parents in the education of their children can help prevent and solve discipline problems. However, this particular suggestion was also made very frequently by parents, who emphasized that they must be involved in any solution to student discipline problems in the schools. Parental involvement is, however, somewhat a catch phrase which can mean many different things to different people.

To school personnel, parental involvement seems to represent support of the school's role in the education of children. This applies particularly to the administration of discipline, where schools expect parents to prepare their children for the disciplined atmosphere of the school. According to school personnel, children who are brought up in a home where good discipline is present will not become discipline problems when they enter the public schools. Schools also expect parents to support decisions made by the

school regarding disciplinary actions. According to school personnel, when such preparation and support are present few discipline problems occur.

Although strongly supportive of the concept of parental involvement, parents tend to see it from a somewhat different perspective than do the schools. Parents tend to see themselves as primarily responsible for the discipline of their children, however parents vary in their beliefs as to what constitutes poor behavior. Considerable testimony was received from parents who expressed strong disagreement with the local schools over particular disciplinary actions taken by the schools with their children. Also, some parents expressed their belief that the local school decisions regarding discipline were discriminatory and based on prejudicial attitudes. Testimony received alleged that suspensions in particular were given more frequently to minority group children than to others. Such allegations were strongly denied by school authorities.

The involvement of parents in the public schools was also described as being further complicated by a feeling on the part of some parents that the schools are not interested in their participation. This feeling may be caused, in part, by differences in culture or language between the parents and school authorities. These differences can create a feeling that the school exists only to reflect the dominant culture of the society and not the culture of the parent and child. The ramifications of such a feeling of estrangement can be significant. If the parent does not feel comfortable in or about the school, the child likely will not either. If the parents do not value the education provided by the schools, the child likely will not either.

Although general unanimity was obvious as to the need for increased parental involvement in the schools, very little was said about how such involvement could be promoted. It does appear that the isolation from the schools felt by many parents and community members is real and presents a serious problem for the schools and for the children. In this area solutions should be found as soon as possible.

Among the possible measures cited which could promote parental involvement

was the use of school social workers. School social work programs would provide the schools with representation in the community, in effect taking the school to the parents. Such programs could be used to discover possible factors in the home which may have a bearing on a child's ability to perform well in school. Social workers could also explain school policies and actions to parents and reduce miscommunication which can lead to misunderstanding. Also mentioned as being of benefit in the promotion of parental involvement in the schools was bilingual education, where the language and culture of the home are represented and reflected in the classroom. Bilingual education is credited in several districts for leading to increased awareness, participation, and trust in the schools among the parents of minority language children. Such programs usually include the participation of parents as aides or as teaching resources.

Smaller schools and smaller school districts were also cited as contributing to greater participation by parents in their child's education. Small schools were seen as having a more open atmosphere and as being more a part of the community as a whole. This difference was credited with contributing to the comparative lack of discipline problems in small schools.

Although parental involvement in the schools implies a two-way relationship in the educational system between parents and the school, it is clear that the primary responsibility for the development of this relationship lies with the schools. Parents do care about their children and do want to help the school ensure that they receive the best possible education, but rightly or wrongly parents often feel that the schools do not want their participation. The schools can help to solve this problem, according to the testimony, by informing parents about the schools and about their children's progress. Many parents seem unaware of what really happens in school. One superintendent testified that the schools should do more to inform parents about the level of academic achievement of students in New Mexico schools, a level which he stated compares well with any area of the nation.

Parental involvement in the schools would apparently do much to reduce problems and increase effectiveness in the schools. However, the lack of this involvement is not a condition that can be easily and simply remedied.

When parents are not involved in the schools it may be an indication that other problems remain unresolved between the home and the school. The lack of parental involvement in the schools can thus be seen as a symptom of underlying problems which must be identified and solved before parents will become active in a partnership with the schools for the education of children.

Higher Standards for Students

Students from all parts of the state agreed that the schools need to set higher expectations for the performance of students. Students in some districts complained that academic standards were too low and that they were not sufficiently challenged. This problem appears to be particularly acute in the senior year, where many students graduate at mid-term or take reduced class loads for part of the school year. Several students asked that graduation requirements be strengthened and that additional advanced classes be offered.

Students also complained of what they saw as lax enforcement of discipline. Some students stated that discipline offenses needed to be treated more seriously by school officials, and that less misbehavior should be tolerated. In some school districts students have a hand in setting discipline policies for the schools and apparently set strict standards for behavior.

Students were also high in their expectations for teachers. Students stated that teachers need to be well prepared in their particular academic field and need to have a genuine enthusiasm and love for teaching. Students expect teachers to respond to their individual needs, and to maintain in their classrooms atmospheres conducive to learning by all students. Students expect teachers to be understanding and to care for each student as an individual. Students do not expect teachers to be easy or to be friends.

The testimony of students at the hearings showed that they wish the schools to provide them with a valuable education, and they are willing to do their part to receive it. Most students are proud of their schools and feel that they are receiving a good education. However, many students also feel that

they want to receive more from the schools and see no reason why more cannot be provided them. Whatever the problems of the public schools in New Mexico, the lack of a motivation to learn among the children of the state is not one of them.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Most of the testimony received throughout the series of hearings consisted of suggestions as to how discipline in the public schools of New Mexico could be improved. This testimony was almost always constructive and many of the suggestions showed genuine insight into the nature of the problems facing the schools. From many of the suggestions it is clear that discipline problems in the schools can be solved.

The following recommendations of the Legislative Education Study Committee represent the findings of the Committee as to what actions will be effective in reducing discipline problems in the public schools of New Mexico. These recommendations call for action on the part of all individuals involved with the schools, including parents, teachers, students, school administrators, school boards, state agencies, and the legislature. Some of the recommendations call for specific action on the part of a specific agency or body. Others are more general in their scope, but are no less important.

Discipline problems in the public schools cannot be seen in isolation, but rather must be considered in the context of the community. These recommendations represent the finding of the Committee that all New Mexicans must cooperate and act to improve the climate for learning in the public schools of New Mexico.

Legislative Action

1. Enact legislation providing penalties for non-student loitering near school and on school campuses.

2. Enact legislation providing penalties for the failure of a parent to ensure the school attendance of a child.

3. Enact legislation providing exemptions from compulsory school attendance to students receiving an alternative form of education more suited to their needs.

4. Consider the impact on school districts of provisions of the Children's Code.

Local School District Action

1. Establish procedures to maintain the security of school campuses, through cooperation with local law enforcement agencies, hiring and training of school security personnel, and close supervision of students outside of classrooms.

2. Develop an awareness among school personnel of drug and alcohol use among students, and reduce such use through identification and treatment of users and identification and prosecution of distributors.

3. Support school bus drivers in the administration of discipline through training of drivers in student management and removal of disruptive students from school buses.

4. Develop close working relationships with juvenile probation officers, children's court attorneys, and social service workers.

5. Strenuously enforce the school attendance of young children through use of the educational neglect provisions of the Children's Code.

6. Enact comprehensive school board attendance policies in each school district.

7. Strenuously enforce the school attendance of older children through use of appropriate penalties, counseling, and referral to social service agencies.

8. Periodically review the use of corporal punishment within the school district.

9. Enact in-school suspension programs at the secondary level, with provisions for remediation and counseling.

10. Provide follow-up counseling to all students involved in disciplinary actions.

11. Establish and strictly follow school board policies for disciplinary procedures.

12. Establish alternative education programs.

13. Expand vocational education offerings at the secondary level, with the goal of insuring that all students receive an education appropriate to their needs.

14. Investigate the use of area vocational schools to provide courses to high school students.

15. Genuinely encourage the meaningful participation of parents in the schools through inclusion of community resources in the curriculum, consultation with parents on discipline and academics, and general publicity about school matters.

16. Reflect the culture and language background of all students in the schools.

17. Consider the beneficial effects of smaller school size in school district planning.

18. Review academic standards, particularly to determine if students are sufficiently challenged throughout school and on every grade level.

19. Ensure the availability of advanced course work to high school students.

20. Establish procedures to involve students in the setting of school policies which affect them, particularly in the area of discipline.

21. Screen all students for possible visual perception problems at regular intervals. Provide treatment for students with diagnosed vision problems.

22. Establish local school board policy for social promotion.

23. Provide for the participation of members of all groups from the community in the schools.

SUMMARY OF SUGGESTIONS FROM TESTIMONY

| NO. TIMES MENTIONED | |
|---|---|
| 51 | Provide Alternative Education Programs |
| 41 | Provide for Parental Involvement and Better Communication Between the Home and School |
| 39 | Set Higher Standards for Student Behavior, Achievement, and Responsibility |
| 28 | Use In-school Suspension |
| 23 | Eliminate Social Promotion |
| 21 | Improve Communication Between Teachers and Students |
| 17 | Reduce School Size |
| 17 | Provide Student Activities |
| 15 | Establish and Follow Formal Discipline Policy in Each School District |
| 13 | Reduce Pupil-Teacher Ratios |
| 13 | Reduce Non-student Loitering |
| 12 | Eliminate Corporal Punishment |
| 11 | Lower Age of Compulsary School Attendance |
| 11 | Strengthen Enforcement of Compulsary School Attendance Law |
| 10 | Expand Vocational Education at Secondary Level |
| 10 | Improve Treatment of Minority Group Members in Curriculum, Employment, and Policies |
| 9 | Reduce Drug and Alcohol Use |
| 9 | Allow Corporal Punishment |
| 8 | Counsel Problem Students |
| 8 | Eliminate Discrimination in the Enforcement of Discipline |
| 7 | Diagnose Potential Problem Students Earlier |
| 6 | Improve School Curriculum |

| | |
|---|---|
| 6 | Improve Teacher Preparation in Discipline and Classroom Management |
| 6 | Improve and Maintain School Facilities |
| 6 | Make Teachers More Accountable To Improve Teaching |
| 6 | Amend Children's Code |
| 6 | Do Not Lower Age of Compulsary School Attendance |
| 6 | Involve Students in Setting of School Policy |
| 5 | Provide Positive School Environment |
| 5 | Improve Coordination Between Schools and Outside Agencies |
| 5 | Protect Due Process Rights of Children |
| 4 | Establish Strong Administration in Each School |
| 4 | Reduce Duties and Paperwork for Teachers |
| 4 | Support Teachers |
| 4 | Use Conventional Suspensions |
| 4 | Remove Disruptive Students From School Busses |
| 4 | Be Consistant in the Administration of Discipline |
| 3 | Provide More Elementary School Counselors |
| 3 | Set Discipline Policy for Special Education Students |
| 2 | Reduce Boredom in School |
| 2 | Expand School Social Work Programs |
| 2 | Establish Teacher Centers |
| 2 | Divide Large School Districts |
| 2 | Establish Programs for Gifted Students |
| 2 | Improve Reporting About the Schools by the News Media |
| 2 | Close Campuses |
| 2 | Treat Reading Disabilities |
| 2 | Teach Parenting Skills to Parents |

| | |
|---|---|
| 2 | Improve Supervision of Students |
| 2 | Remove Juvenile Offenders From School |
| 2 | Close School Parking Lots |
| 2 | Hire More Minority Staff |
| 2 | Request All Legislators to Teach a Day |
| 2 | Make Parents Legally Responsible for the Behavior of Their Children |
| 2 | Determine School Role in Society |
| 2 | Open School Campuses |
| 2 | Control Education Locally |
| 2 | Provide Bilingual Education |
| 1 | Provide More Jobs for High School Graduates |
| 1 | Modify Funding Formula to Encourage Attendance |
| 1 | Increase Prosecution of Juvenile Offenders |
| 1 | Improve Student-to-Student Communication |
| 1 | Treat Emotionally Disturbed Students |
| 1 | Identify and Treat Visual Perception Problems |
| 1 | Control Sales of Solvents and Inhalents |
| 1 | Grant Teachers Release Time |
| 1 | Provide Separate Classes For Students With Emotional Problems |
| 1 | Assign Better Teachers To Remedial Classes |
| 1 | Teach Values At Home and Not In School |
| 1 | Improve Teaching of Basic Skills in Early Grades |
| 1 | Reduce Affirmative Action |
| 1 | Permit Students to Drive to School |
| 1 | Allow Students to Smoke |

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Establish Juvenile Jury Programs |
| 1 | Establish Procedures to Investigate Abuse of Children by Schools |
| 1 | Increase Funding of Special Education |
| 1 | Eliminate Teacher Tenure |
| 1 | Expand Art Education |
| 1 | Reduce Number of Activities |
| 1 | Eliminate In-school Suspension |
| 1 | Eliminate Searches of Student Lockers |
| 1 | Establish Dress Codes |
| 1 | Improve Teaching of Morality |
| 1 | Involve Bus Drivers as Part of Instructional Team |
| 1 | Provide Insurance to Students for Health and Psychological Care |
| 1 | Hold Human Relations Workshops for School Personnel |
| 1 | Include Parents in the School Curriculum |
| 1 | Eliminate Segregation of Children Based Upon Qualification for Federal Programs |
| 1 | Compile Discipline Policies of All New Mexico School Districts |

TABLE 1

ATTENDANCE AT L.E.S.C. PUBLIC HEARINGS

| | Las Vegas | | Albuquerque | | Las Cruces | | Clovis | | Roswell | | Farmington | | TOTAL | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Parents | 13 | 11.3 | 33 | 24.1 | 36 | 21.4 | 76 | 31.1 | 20 | 11.5 | 30 | 17.8 | 208 | 20.7 |
| Students | 7 | 6.1 | 14 | 10.2 | 15 | 8.9 | 52 | 21.3 | 15 | 8.6 | 37 | 21.9 | 140 | 13.9 |
| Teachers | 22 | 19.1 | 18 | 13.2 | 40 | 23.8 | 42 | 17.2 | 18 | 10.3 | 17 | 10.1 | 157 | 15.6 |
| Administrators | 37 | 32.2 | 26 | 19.0 | 37 | 22.0 | 35 | 14.3 | 75 | 43.1 | 40 | 23.7 | 250 | 24.8 |
| School Board Members | 3 | 2.6 | 3 | 2.2 | 5 | 3.0 | 1 | .4 | 5 | 2.9 | 8 | 4.7 | 25 | 2.5 |
| Other School-Related | 10 | 8.7 | 7 | 5.1 | 17 | 10.1 | 20 | 8.2 | 31 | 17.8 | 23 | 13.6 | 108 | 10.7 |
| State (SDE) | 6 | 5.2 | 11 | 8.0 | 5 | 3.0 | 3 | 1.2 | 2 | 1.1 | 3 | 1.8 | 30 | 3.0 |
| Others (JPO,HSD, University) | 17 | 14.8 | 25 | 18.2 | 13 | 7.7 | 15 | 6.1 | 8 | 4.6 | 11 | 6.5 | 89 | 8.8 |
| Counted, but not signed-in | 20 | | 15 | | 71 | | 40 | | 48 | | 58 | | 252 | |
| TOTALS | 135 | | 152 | | 239 | | 284 | | 222 | | 227 | | 1259 | |

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
SENATE BILL 11

34TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 1980

AN ACT

MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE FOR THE CONDUCT OF PUBLIC HEARINGS RELATING TO STUDENT DISCIPLINE, IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION, SOCIAL PROMOTION, NONSTUDENT LOITERING, PARKING LOT PRIVILEGES, STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

Section 1. APPROPRIATION.--Five thousand dollars ($5,000) is appropriated from the general fund to the legislative education study committee for expenditure in the sixty-eighth and sixty-ninth fiscal years for the purpose of holding public hearings in Las Vegas, Albuquerque, Roswell, Farmington, Las Cruces and Clovis, to receive testimony and information from interested individuals and parties relating to student discipline, in-school suspension, social promotion, nonstudent loitering, parking lot privileges, student rights and responsibilities and student

[bracketed material] = deletion

academic achievement. In addition to membership of the committee, the speaker of the house and president pro tempore of the senate may each appoint two additional members to participate in the public hearings. The appropriation is to be used to pay the per diem and travel expenses of the committee and other appointed members, as well as other expenses incurred in carrying out the provisions of this act. The New Mexico congress of parents and teachers and the state department of education are requested to participate in the public hearings. The committee shall report its findings and recommendations to the first session of the thirty-fifth legislature. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of the sixty-ninth fiscal year shall revert to the general fund.

Section 2. EMERGENCY.--It is necessary for the public peace, health and safety that this act take effect immediately.